

A SUGGESTED SYLLABUS FOR THE ADVANCED LEVEL ENGLISH COURSE AT GENDARMERIE SCHOOLS COMMAND IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATO STANAG 6001 LEVEL 3 PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: *The aim of this study is to prepare a suggested syllabus in accordance with NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 perspective for the Advanced Level English Course at Gendarmerie Schools Command which is subordinate to Gendarmerie General Command. It is believed that this study will contribute to other studies in the context of NATO Stanag 6001 language standards at Language Schools of Armed Forces both at home and in the world. The data in this study collected from the trainees, teachers, graduates, and the organization by means of NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 Questionnaire, Graduate Questionnaire, and Teachers Questionnaire, Trainee Questionnaire, Trainee Interest Questionnaire, NATO Stanag Level 3 Exam and KPDS Exam. This data proves that the present course is insufficient in reaching language skills objectives; i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing which are vitally important to be successful in international joint missions. Therefore, in the suggested syllabus, the aim is to improve four language skills and to put into practice a topic-based syllabus to meet the professional needs of the personnel. In addition, a task-based syllabus is given priority for speaking and writing skills which are usually believed to be insufficient in especially international missions.*

Key Words: *NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 Syllabus, a syllabus for Gendarmerie General Command, syllabus design in ELT*

Jandarma Okullar Komutanlığında Açılan İleri Seviye İngilizce Kursu için Nato Dil Standartları 6001 Seviye 3 Çerçevesinde Önerilen Müfredat Programı

Özet: *Bu çalışmanın amacı, Jandarma Genel Komutanlığına bağlı Jandarma Okullar Komutanlığındaki İleri Seviye İngilizce Kursu için NATO Stanag 6001 3. seviyeye uygun bir müfredat programı hazırlamaktır. Bu çalışmanın gerek dünyada gerekse Türkiye'deki Silahlı Kuvvetler Lisan Okullarında NATO Stanag 6001 dil standartları kapsamında yapılan çalışmalara da katkı sağlayacağı değerlendirilmektedir. Çalışmada kullanılan veriler; mevcut kursiyer, öğretmen, mezun kursiyer ve kurumdan, NATO Stanag 6001 Seviye 3 Anketi, Mezun Anketi, Öğretmen Anketi, Kursiyer Anketi, Kursiyer İlgi Anketi, NATO Stanag Seviye 3 Sınavı, KPDS Sınav sonuçları vasıtasıyla toplanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler, mevcut kursun özellikle uluslar arası görevlerde başarı getirecek dinleme, okuma, konuşma, yazma becerileri yönüyle yeterli olmadığını göstermiştir. Bu nedenle tavsiye edilen müfredatta özellikle dört dil becerisinin geliştirilmesi hedeflenmiş, mesleki İngilizce ihtiyacını karşılamak maksadıyla da konu içerikli bir programa yer verilmiştir.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *NATO Stanag 6001 Seviye 3 müfredat, Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı için müfredat, İngilizce öğretiminde müfredat geliştirme.*

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Introduction

Turkey has been an active member of NATO since 1952 and has been participating in many international joint operations in various parts of the world. Some of these missions are administrative duties and some others are combating ones requiring communication and co- communication is operation with the members of other armies.

Therefore, both NATO and member states have given importance to language learning and standardization activities by establishing professional organizations with educated staff in this field. In this context, the Bureau for International Language Cooperation (BILC) has been operating since 1978 as a consultative and advisory body for language training matters in NATO¹. In 2002, BILC released a document on the standardization of language training and testing called NATO Stanag (Standard agreement) 6001 explaining the details of language proficiency levels that military personnel are supposed to have in order to participate in joint international missions. The NATO member countries deploying personnel to joint missions have been following these standards since 2002. Some countries train their soldiers in Army/Navy/Air Force language schools and test the personnel in terms of Stanag 6001. In Turkey, there are various language courses including Gendarmerie Foreign Language Course in the military, but there is no syllabus prepared to fulfill NATO language training and testing standards even though many Turkish military personnel are deployed to international posts. Therefore, It is the aim of study to prepare a syllabus for the Advanced Level English Course at Gendarmerie Schools Command that fulfills the requirements defined in Level 3 (Minimum professional level). We decided on this level because this was the minimum level for the military personnel to communicate accurately and appropriately in four skills to maintain the communication without misunderstanding. In this context, it is hypothesized that the Advanced Level English Course at Gendarmerie Schools Command lacks a sound basis in terms of syllabus in accordance with NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 perspective.

Literature Review

This study reviews the literature about Gendarmerie General Command and its language training activities, NATO Language Standardization studies and theoretical basis for syllabus design.

¹ BILC Website <http://www.dlielc.org/bilc/Constitution2004.doc>

Gendarmerie General Command (GGC)

Gendarmerie General Command is a law enforcement agency having military status and making efforts to establish peace and to prove internal security throughout the country². Turkish Gendarmerie, within the framework of responsibilities and the powers given by the laws, performs general security and public order duties by merging military with law enforcement agency characteristics.

GGC is a member of the Association of the European and Mediterranean Gendarmerie and Police Forces with Military Status (FIEP) established for the purpose of reinforcing the relations and strengthening solidarity reciprocally between the Law Enforcement Agencies of European Countries and the Countries having Mediterranean coastline. Moreover, Gendarmerie organization has many international activities within its jurisdiction and deploys lots of personnel abroad and welcomes so many others to share its experience with the members of the other nationals. For example, in 2007, 273 personnel; in 2008, 265 personnel were deployed to international missions more than six months³. In addition to this data there are also lots of short term visits reciprocally for vocational purposes. Since great importance is attached to foreign relations in gendarmerie, foreign language education, especially English language teaching, is primarily emphasized in educational environment.

At Gendarmerie Schools Command, the duration of the Advanced Level English Course is 18 weeks and trainees study 37 hours of English a week⁴. In these courses American Language Course (ALC) series are used as course books. These series are designed to prepare the trainees for the ECL (English Comprehension Level) examination based on reading and listening comprehension. Oral and written productions are not assessed at all. On the other hand, trainees have to take KPDS exam (reading comprehension) and English General Screening Exam (listening comprehension) in order to be deployed to joint missions and these exams are totally different from ECL exam in terms of difficulty, language level and language requirements.

Current Applications of NATO Language Issues

Although English and French are official languages at NATO, English is the operational language and the teaching, testing, and using the English language within the NATO community have become more important because of the addition of new countries and increasing number of joint tasks such as peace support operations. Due to the vitality of the language issues, the Bureau of International Language Coordination (BILC) was established within the NATO Training Group (NTG) / Joint Services Subgroup (JSSG) as a consultative and advisory body for language training matters in NATO. The BILC has the following responsibilities:

² Law No 2803 on Organization, Duties and Powers of Turkish Gendarmerie

³ Data collected from Gendarmerie General Command Headquarters

⁴ Advanced Level English Course syllabus term 2008-2009

- To review the work done in the coordination field and in the study of particular language topics through the convening of an annual conference and seminar for participating nations.
- To act as a clearinghouse for the exchange of information between participating countries on developments in the field of language training.
- To provide the sponsorship of STANAG 6001, Language Proficiency Level⁵

To follow these principles, governments allocate a large number of human and financial resources to language training and try to achieve the prescribed Standard Language Profile (SLP) through national systems. There are currently 48 nations using Stanag 6001 criteria in their language systems. They are supposed to establish their own training structure, design their syllabi and teaching materials, implement a testing framework, develop tests and monitor training outcomes⁶.

NATO Standardization Agreement (Stanag 6001) Language Proficiency Levels

This document was released by NATO (BILC) in 2003 as the Second Edition and since then member countries follow these principles while deploying personnel for International Joint Missions. The aim of this agreement is to provide NATO Forces with a table describing Language proficiency levels. Participating nations agree to adopt the table of language proficiency levels for the purpose of⁷ :

- Meeting language requirements for international staff appointments.
- Comparing national standards through a standardized table.
- Recording and reporting, in international correspondence, measures of language proficiency.

The proficiency skills are broken down into six levels coded 0 through 5. In general terms, skills may be defined as follows:

Level 0		No practical proficiency
Level 1	-	Elementary
Level 2	-	Fair (Limited working)
Level 3	-	Good (Minimum professional)
Level 4	-	Very good (Full professional)
Level 5	-	Excellent (Native/bilingual)

⁵ www.dlielc.org/bilc/Constitution2004.doc May 5, 2006

⁶ Dubeau, J. (2006) An Exploratory Study of OPI Ratings across NATO Countries Using the NATO STANAG 6001 Scale. Unpublished Masters Thesis. Canada

⁷ NATO STANAG 6001, Ed.2, (2003), Retrieved www.dlielc.org/bilc/Sta_Edit2, (November 4, 2005).

Syllabus Design

Although syllabus design studies have been one of the major factors in language teaching for a long time, curriculum development and syllabus design actually began in 1960s as we know it today (Richards, 2001). Since then, these studies have undergone some changes through time in accordance with the innovations in education, foreign and second language teaching field.

Graves⁸ identifies syllabus design components as follows: “ (1) needs analysis (needs assessment): what are my students’ needs? How can I assess them so that I can address them? (2) determining the goals and objectives: what are the purposes and intended outcomes of the course? What will my students need to do or learn to achieve these goals? (3) conceptualizing content: what will be the backbone of what I teach? What will I include in my syllabus? (4) selecting and developing materials and activities: how and with what will I teach the course? What is my role? What are my students roles? (5) organization of content and activities: how will I organize the content and activities? What systems will I develop? (6) evaluation: how will I assess what students have learned? How will I assess the effectiveness of the course? (7) consideration of resources and constraints: what are givens of my situation?”

Method and Data Collection

Subjects

This study is conducted at Gendarmerie General Command and English Language Teaching Courses at Gendarmerie Schools Command in Beytepe in 2009. One group of subjects is these 30 trainees attending Advanced Level English Course for 18 weeks. NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 questionnaire, trainee questionnaire and trainee interest questionnaire are given to them to analyze their needs.

The second group of subjects is officers and NCOs at various ranks graduated from these courses between the years 2002 and 2008. The third group is the teachers teaching in these courses. Since the number of teachers is 6, all of them participate in the research. There are totally 76 subjects in this research.

Instruments

The instruments used for this study are “can do” statements for NATO STANAG 6001 Level 3, Trainee Questionnaire (Pehlivan, 2003), Graduate Questionnaire, Teachers Questionnaire (Rahim, 2003), Trainee Interest Questionnaire, a Stanag Level 3 test in four skills and KPDS scores of the graduates.

⁸ Graves, K. (2000). *Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers*. Boston: Heinle&Heinle

Data Collection

First, “Can do” statements for NATO STANAG 6001 Level 3, Trainee Questionnaire, Trainee Interest Questionnaire are surveyed to 30 trainees at the end of the semester taking Advanced Level English Course at Gendarmerie Schools Command in Beytepe in 2009. Simultaneously, Teachers Questionnaire was given to 6 teachers teaching at Advanced Level English Course to collect data from teachers’ perspective.

Second, The list of the personnel attended the Advanced Level English Course between the dates 2002 and 2008 was collected from the authorities and the Graduate Questionnaire was sent to nearly 160 subjects by means of military intra network’s emails.

Third, Stanag Level 3 test in four skills was given to 30 trainees to assess their level that they reached at the end of the semester by means of current program.

Fourth, the data on KPDS scores of the graduates and the number of Gendarmerie personnel serving or taking a course abroad in 2007 and in 2008 were asked from the Gendarmerie Authorities to evaluate the current English Course and to understand the role of English Language in this organization.

Analysis of data

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Qualitative data was collected from the graduate questionnaire whereas quantitative data was collected from teachers, trainees, NATO Stanag 6001, trainee interest questionnaires, NATO Stanag 6001 Exams, KPDS scores of the graduate personnel.

The Table 1: The Source of Data and Measurement Tools

Source of Data	Qualitative	Quantitative	SPSS	Excel
Graduate Questionnaire	+	+	-	+
Trainee Questionnaire		+	+	
Teachers Questionnaire		+	+	
Trainee Interest Questionnaire	+	+		+
NATO Stanag 6001 Questionnaire		+	+	
NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 Exams		+		+
KPDS Exam scores		+		

The number of personnel being abroad		+		
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Findings

Findings were presented in the doctorate thesis in charts and SPSS program for each questionnaire in detail. The following are the interpretation of all data collected from the data collection instruments.

Teachers, Trainees and Graduates' Perception about the Course

- The course is sufficient in reaching the reading and grammar objectives.
- The course needs improvement in listening and speaking objectives.
- The course is insufficient in reaching professional English, writing and translation objectives.
- The language teaching materials (course book, the content, topics and exercises) should be revised or replaced.
- Teachers are not fully aware of the objectives of the course.
- Exams should be revised
- Learning environment (classroom and labs) should be revised.

Exams

- According to Stanag Level 3 exam, trainees are not proficient enough to get the required score.
- According to the Stanag Level 3 exam, trainees are the best at reading skill and the worst at writing skill.
- According to the trainees and teachers questionnaires, speaking and writing skills should be included in the exams.
- The course can be considered successful in reaching ECL goals.
- According to the graduate questionnaire, the course should be designed to fulfil the requirements for future exams.
- The current program is not adequate to get the trainees prepare for the exams in four skills.

Skills

Reading Skill

- Subjects generally consider themselves “good or excellent” in this skill.
- Reading skill is the most frequently used skill in the profession, because subjects spend much time preparing KPDS exam based on reading skill.
- The present course helps to improve reading skill and vocabulary the most.
- According to the results of NATO Stanag Level 3 Exam, trainees’ average score of reading skill is lower than required even though their averages in reading skill are higher than other skills.
- Although subjects’ perception on reading skill is positive, the outcome of the exams indicates that the course needs improvement in terms of reading skill.

Listening Skill

- Subjects generally consider themselves “not bad” in this skill.
- Listening skill is the second in the use of language skills in the profession because subjects spend much time preparing General Screening exam based on listening skill and oral skills are paramount to be successful in international missions.
- The present course partly helps to improve listening skill.
- According to the results of NATO Stanag Level 3 Exam, trainees’ average score of listening skill is lower than required.
- There is a controversy between the perceptions of the subjects on listening skills.
- The outcomes indicate that the course needs improvement in terms of listening skill.

Speaking Skill

- Few subjects consider themselves “good” in this skill.
- Speaking skill should primarily be improved for the profession, because the core of communication is to express himself/herself in an appropriate way.
 - Although subjects consider the speaking skill important for the profession, they have negative attitude towards the achievements speaking subskills via the present course.
- According to the results of NATO Stanag Level 3 Exam, trainees’ average score of speaking skill is lower than required.
- Speaking skill should be included in the exams.
- The outcomes indicate that the course needs improvement in terms of speaking skill.

Writing Skill

- Few subjects use writing skill in the profession. Therefore, very few believe that writing skill should be improved for the profession.
- The attitude of the subjects to the writing skill is commonly negative.
- The present course does not help to improve writing skill.
- According to the results of NATO Stanag Level 3 Exam, trainees’ average score of writing skill is lower than required.
- Subjects consider themselves insufficient in writing skill.
- Writing skill should be included in the exams.
- The outcomes indicate that the course needs improvement in terms of writing skill.

Course Content, Materials and NATO Stanag Content

- The goals and objectives of the current course do not match with learners’ expectations and institutional goals.
- The goals and objectives of the current course do not match with NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 objectives.

- The goals and objectives should be revised in accordance with NATO Stanag Level 3 perspective.
- The main goal should be to train learners in four skills with regard to NATO Stanag Level 3 standards.
- The content should be restructured in terms of learners' expectations and institutional needs.

Graduate, teacher and trainee perception about the current course content and materials

- Course books need supplementation. Or it should be replaced or revised.
- The content of the course book should be designed in accordance with learners' ideas based on learners' interest questionnaire and organizational needs.
- Authentic materials should be used as supplementary materials.
- The activities improving speaking and writing skills should be fostered.
- Content and task variety should be provided.
- The setting should be restructured with multimedia systems to train learners in four skills.
- Speaking and writing skills should be included in the exams.

Evaluation of KPDS Scores and NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 Exam Results in Four Skills

According to the data obtained, the average of KPDS scores of the graduates was 60. It should be reminded that the language requirement to register at the Advanced Level Course was to get 46 – 59 scores from the KPDS exam. In addition, according to the data obtained from the graduate questionnaire, the average of KPDS scores of the graduates was 63. In other words, the course did not prove so successful in succeeding KPDS exams by means of the current programme.

As of NATO Stanag 6001 Level 3 Exam results in four skills, the average score of reading skill of 30 trainees was 14,2 out of 25. For listening, it was 13,6; for speaking it was 12 and for writing it was 10. The average of four

skills was 65,5 out of 100. It can be understood that the trainees' level in reading skill was the best and in writing was the worst.

Trainees Interest Questionnaire

According to the results from Trainees Interest Questionnaire, the most interesting 10 topics for the trainees were Terrorism and Counter-terrorism, Public order and security, career in the military, communication and language, multinational peace support operations, military briefings, sports and physical training, humanitarian assistance in joint missions, leaders and leadership, human psychology in military context. Most of these topics were the duties of the gendarmerie both inside and outside the country. On the other hand, military history, arms and communication, military engineering / sapper activities, military units and military signalling were among the topics that subjects avoided to mark as a high frequency because these topics were secondarily important for the gendarmerie personnel.

The Suggested Syllabus

Guidelines for the Suggested program

Duration of the course: 12 weeks/360 hours class session. 120 hours self-study in the language lab./ 2 hours every work day.

Age and composition of the learners: the age of the learners range from 22 to 40 and the status of the learners are the Non-commissioned officers and officers.

Entry Level: Intermediate to Advanced level. The minimum requirement from NATO Stanag Level 3 exam is 50-60.

Academic experience: The learners are expected to have a four year university degree. These can be Military Academy or a university degree.

Assessment: Mid-term exams are administered in four skills upon the completion of each unit every week. And a final NATO Stanag Level 3 exam is given at the end of the course term and minimum requirement for having a passing grade is 80. In addition, homework, projects, teachers' comments are taken into consideration.

Table 2 The Suggested Syllabus For Nato Stanag Level 3

Unit	Title	Objectives/subskills	Vocabulary	Task	Grammar
1	Terrorism and Counter-terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and participating effectively most formal and informal conversations on terrorism and counter-terrorism Reading with almost complete comprehension a variety of authentic written material on relevant topic Using written language for analysis, argumentation, explanation, narration and description. 	Insurgency, counter-insurgency Operations cooperation	Draw and describe the organizational chart of your unit	Real and unreal conditions Modals of ability, possibility Review of present tenses
2	Public order and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding language used at interactive meetings, briefings and other form of extended discourse Demonstrating language competence when conducting meetings Conveying abstract concepts in discussion of relevant topics Using written language for extensive explanation, narration and description. 	Security Public order Law Crimes criminals	Write instructions to prepare for an important exercise	Relative clauses Likes dislikes Future tense with will and be going to
3	Career in the military	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding both explicit and implicit information in a spoken text Producing extended discourse and conveying meaning correctly and effectively Supporting opinion, argumentation, clarification, narration and description. 	Military service Military life Ranks, insignia, recruitment, personnel issues	Write a paragraph describing your career in the military	Present perfect tense Noun clauses
4	Communication and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the essentials of conversations Making telephone calls Supporting opinion Interpreting material correctly Relating ideas Writing correspondence 	e-mails interpreters communication public relations	Describe the facilities on your base	Sentence connectors Instructions modals of permission and prohibition
5	Multinational peace support operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrating understanding of abstract concepts in discussion of complex topics as well as professional field Using the language for answering objection, clarifying points, supporting opinion Demonstrating understanding of abstract concepts in texts on complex topics such as culture, science and technology 	Ally, take action, intelligence, insurgency, insignia, forces, peacekeeping, fighter, territory, troop, battalion, deploy,	Match the words with the definitions	review of imperatives Causatives Wish clauses Adverbial

*A SUGGESTED SYLLABUS FOR THE ADVANCED LEVEL ENGLISH COURSE
AT GENDARMERIE SCHOOLS COMMAND IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATO
STANAG 6001 LEVEL 3 PERSPECTIVE*

167

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing extensive explanation, narration, description 	battle, emergency,		clauses
6	Military briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding interactive meetings, briefings Supporting opinion, argumentation, objection, clarifying points, delivering briefings Using written language for narration and explanation 	Meetings Liason, Introduction, Conclusion, discussion	Listen to a briefing and take notes	Reported speech Simple past and past perfect
7	Sports and physical training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding face to face speech delivered with normal speed Using the language to perform common professional task Understanding abstract concepts in texts on complex topics in Professional field Using the written language for explanation, narration and description 	Exercises Fitness Combat effectiveness	Write instructions for dealing with emergencies	Past conditional Gerunds and infinitives
8	Humanitarian assistance in joint missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding meetings, briefings clearly Using the language for answering objection, clarifying points, supporting opinion Interpreting the text correctly Using the written language for explanation, narration and description Making and responding to telephone calls/conversations 	Civil-military cooperation Natural disasters Aid Operational briefings Food and drink Non-government organizations	Read the situations and choose the best course of action	Cause and effect Conclusion Modals used for past time
9	Leaders and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrating understanding of abstract concepts in discussion of complex topics as well as Professional field Conveying meaning correctly and effectively Describing problems and suggesting possible solutions Getting the gist of higher level, sophisticated texts Using written language for analysis, hypothesis, explanation and description 	Leadership qualities, tactical task Military history	Talk about a famous battle in the history of your country	
10	Human psychology in military context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrating through spoken interaction the ability to understand effectively face face speech delivered with normal speed Discussing particular interests and special fields of competence easily Recognizing humor, emotional overtones and subtleties of speech Conveying abstract concepts when writing about complex topics as 	Character types Stress Obligation War battle	Talk about a difficult problem or situation when you were in charge and say how you dealt with it	

		well as Professional field			
11	Crime and punishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following accurately the essentials of conversations among speakers, lectures on general subjects and special fields of competence Using the language for answering objections, clarifying points, justifying decisions, stating and defending policy Interpreting material correctly Writing formal correspondence and documents on Professional topics 	Law Crime Law enforcement agency criminal	Match the crew with the missions	
12	Cultural differences in joint missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguishing between different stylistic levels Recognizing humor, emotional overtones, subtleties of speech Conveying abstract concepts in discussion of culture, science, technology and philosophy Demonstrating understanding of abstract concepts in texts on complex topics such as culture, science and technology. 	Culture Local International Cultural stereotypes	Talk about the priorities in your mission	

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Study

Language issues have been vital within the framework of NATO (joint missions) in recent years, but there is almost no academic study analyzing this issue professionally both at home and all over the world. It is hoped that this study is the first step to pave way for further studies and sets a sample for the other military organizations such as Navy, Air Force and Army in Turkey.

It is suggested that a course book covering the 12-week educational year for the Advanced Level English Course at Gendarmerie Schools Command be prepared. The course book should be designed around the topics and skills in the suggested syllabus and should be in line with the module prepared in accordance with the syllabus.

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